UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/54/485
S/1999/1081
21 October 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-fourth session
Agenda items 43, 44 and 89
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO
INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS
OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 21 October 1999 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Israel, the occupying Power, continues to pursue its illegal settlement activities, including the establishment of new settlements, the enlargement of existing ones and the additional confiscation of Palestinian land. Such a policy and actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, are illegal, violate relevant United Nations Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and directly threaten the peace process, its integrity and its chances for success.

Last week, the Israeli government took a decision related to the so-called hilltop settlements, which were established by Jewish settlers, after the signing of the Wye River Memorandum, with the complicity of the authorities of the occupying Power. That decision, while removing some of those hilltop settlements, effectively means that the government is proceeding with the establishment of 32 new settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem. In addition, the government continues to issue tenders for the construction of additional housing units in the existing settlements, including at Jabal Abu Ghneim and even in the Gaza Strip.

Further, on 26 September 1999, the Israeli occupying army confiscated massive areas of land for the so-called "military training". These included 10,000 dunums (2,470 acres) around Izna and 13,000 dunums (3,213 acres) around Beit Awla, both in the southern West Bank. Other confiscation took place in

connection with the building of more so-called bypass roads for use by the Jewish settlers.

It is very unfortunate that all of the above is happening at a time when some hope has been emerging with regard to implementation of the Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum. We strongly believe that this peace process cannot proceed to a successful conclusion while the occupying Power continues its campaign of settlements as it strives for the colonization of Palestinian land from which Israel must withdraw in implementation of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which is the aim of the Middle East peace process.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under items 43, 44 and 89 of the agenda of the fifty-fourth session, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nasser AL-KIDWA
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations